SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH: Sir, in view of the increasing demand for TV viewing from all over the country, may I know from the Hon'ble Minister as to by what time he will cover 90 per cent of the country's population by low power TV and high power TV transmitters?

SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT: As I have said, when the Seventh Five-Year Plan schemes are completed, for about 83 per cent of the area of population, TV signals will be available. Obviously, when the phased Plan schemes come, more or less, the entire country should be covered, almost—I would say that. I would like to tell the honourable Member that I calculated from the point of view of Parliamentary constituencies. When all these Seventh Five-Year Plan schemes are completed—in addition we have the scheme for border transmission and we are making arrangements for its implementation —except for five Parliamentary constituencies, all other Parliamentary constituencies would have TV signals in some quantity— partially or a little more. I would say, with due respect. Sir, that world experts have said that ours is the largest TV audience in the shortest possible time. That is they comment of appreciation given to those engineers and others who have planned and implemented expansion of the TV in the country.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Demands of Bharatiya Krishak Samaj

*85. SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE:
SHRI KAILASH PATI MISHRA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether at a convention of Bharatiya Krishak Samaj held in February, 1989, at Kekri (Rajasthan) demands were made that (i) the Agriculture Price Commission should have an increased representation of farmers in it and that it may be headed by a farmer only, (ii) Prices of agriculture products be linked with the general price index; (iii) interest-free loans be extended to farmers in lieu of subsidies for purchase of inputs; (iv) Farmers be associated in the quality control measures to curb the supply of sub-standard inputs; and (v) Crop-insurance be replaced by a revolving fund raised by the farmers, the States and the Central Governments; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV): (a) and (b) The demands actually raised in the Convention of Bharat Krishak Samaj held in February, 1989 at Kekri (Rajasthan) and presented in a Memorandum are annexed. (*See* statement below).

The position on the issues raised in the question is as follows:—

(i) There are three non-official members representing farmers' interests on the Commission for Agricultural costs and Prices. An eminent economist heads the Commission.

(ii) While recommending a price policy for a commodity the Commission takes into account not only a comprehensive overview of the entire structure of the economy of a particular commodity but also a number of important factors as indicated below:—

1. Cost of Production.
2. Changes in input prices
3. Input-Output price parity.
4. Trends in market prices.
5. Demand and supply.
6. Inter-crop price parity.
7. Effect on industrial cost structure.

8. Effect on general price level.

9. Effect of cost of living.

10. International market price situation.

11. Parity between prices paid and prices received.

(iii) Financial institutions raise resources at a cost and, therefore, it is not possible to extend interest-free loans. However, crop loans are granted to agriculturists at concessional rates of interest.

(iv) The farmers can effectively help in the enforcement of quality control by being vigilant in reporting the sale of sub-standard inputs to the concerned authorities.

(v) The creation of a National Agricultural Credit Relief Fund with participation by Central and State Governments to provide relief to farmers is receiving the attention of the Government.

Statement

Demands indicated in the Rajya Sabha Question	Demands raised in the memorandum
(i) The Agriculture Price Commission should have an increased representation of farmers in its and that it may be headed by a farmer only.	The price of agricultural produce should be remunerative. It would be possible only if the economists connected with the fixing of prices of agricultural produce are the people who have got practical experience in the field.
(ii) Prices of agriculture products be linked with the general price index.	The prices of agricultural produce may be linked with prices of agricultural inputs like the price index as in the case of salaried persons so as to bring parity and removed an all time irritant.
(iii) Interest-free loans be extended to farmers in lieu of subsidies for purchase of input.	The subsidies being given by the Government in different shapes and forms in the agriculture sector do not reach the farmers. Therefore, the total amount on account of various subsidies be given to the Banks, as deposit and the Banks, should in turn advance interest free loans.
(iv) Farmers be associated in the quality control measures to curb the supply of sub-standard inputs.	Quality control may be exercised by the farmers through Bharat Krisak Samaj Units in the States. Adulteration in fertilizers, insecticides and pesticides may be effectively checked. The farmer should have a right to get samples of these eitems. Laboratories may be established at Block levels for this purpose.
(v) Crop insurance be replaced by a revolving fund raised by the farmers, the States and the Central Governments.	A National "Natural Calamity Revolving Fund" be created to meet the menace of drought floods, hailstorm etc.